

Connections: a comprehensive thesis project

An honors thesis (Honors 499)

by

Stephen C. Killion

Thesis Advisor
Andrea Swartz

Ball State University
Muncie, Indiana

Thesis completed during the spring semester of 2007

Will graduate on May 5, 2007

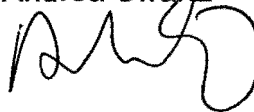
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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'AS', located below the text 'Thesis Advisor Andrea Swartz'.

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Abstract:

In a lot of ways the design process is a very complex system of research, conceptualization, documentation, construction, and design. The standard architectural studio process typically only allows students to experience a portion of the steps required within the process. The intention of the *Connections* thesis project was to allow my partner and me the opportunity to take a project through the entire design process. The thesis was considered a design-build project and allowed us to move beyond the typical theoretical design completed within the studio setting.

The project was designed to be a semi-permanent installation that would be installed within the CAP building. The installation was to be an interactive seating space that would allow the user to interact in a variety of ways. It was our chosen task to not only design the project, but also build a full scale piece that could be used by all the inhabitants of the CAP building. There were three major components that we felt the thesis would teach us; The first was a extensive understanding of the ergonomics and qualities needed to design quality seating, second is being able to actually build one of the projects that we designed, and third is getting a understanding of materials and connections through the actual building of elegant pieces of furniture. Once the thesis project was completed a book was created as a way to graphically showcase the entire progression of the project.

The project allowed us to deal firsthand with many issues found everyday in the design practice. We had to deal with the realistic issues of having a client, working within a particular budget, completing the project within a set timeframe, and handling many of the general problems that arise from these particular issues. The project gave us an extensive understanding of the true dedication and time it takes to complete a design-build project.

Acknowledgments:

There are many people I would like to thank that were imperative to the completion of the project.

- first and foremost I would like to thank my partner Derek Mills for being a great work partner, and creating the diversity needed to complete the project
- Andrea Swartz for being an amazing mentor and advisor throughout the project and for always believing in us even when things seemed impossible
- Brian Hollars for telling us if our idea would work or not
- Woodshop Bob for allowing us to constantly be in the woodshop working and for all of the help along the way
- The staff of the woodshop for helping us whenever we needed it
- Harry Eggink for taking the time to critique us
- Michelle the associate dean for allowing us to actually construct the project
- Frank Miller lumber for the amazing deal they gave us for all of the wood purchased for the project
- Super Rent for the use of there scaffolding
- Derek's old boss for welding the steel connections used in the wood wall
- Our parents for all of the help and support throughout the entire project
- The Pepsi Company and all of the Energy Drink companies for the creation of the highly caffeinated drinks that keep us going throughout. (a.k.a. Mountain Dew and Red Bull mostly)
- Scotty's for the good food after a hard days work
- And for anyone else that I forgot to thank above, **THANK YOU!** Your support and trust in us made the project possible.

I would also like to thank everyone that has given us positive feedback for the final outcome of the project. It was our hope all along that people would truly enjoy the project and the positive remarks help to strengthen that hope. Hopefully the project will stay up for many years to come so that others can enjoy the project.

Dear reader of this thesis project,

The following pages contain the pages from the book I created showcasing our thesis project. The book contains all of the information needed to thoroughly explain the installation. Also included within this packet is a bound version of the booklet which was how it was intended to be created. It should be noted that the installation may not stay within the building forever, but should be visited for a more complete understanding of the complexity of the project. It is our intention that other students use this piece as a form of inspiration to complete their own project. Also bar stools are still needed for the completion of the space and it is our hope that other designers feel the urge to create unique stools for the site.

Thanks for taking the time to read through my thesis

Stephen C Killion

4th year Architecture student and glUe_08 editor

p.s. If this project gets you interested in researching other projects designed within the architectural program I would recommend contacting one of the current members of glUe for copies of the journals. Also both Bracken and the architecture library contain copies of all of the journals.